

Puppeteers Pull Strings at Magic Mountain

VALENCIA, Calif. — Who pulls the strings at Six Flags Magic Mountain? The Magic Moments puppeteers do. In fact, they pull strings for more than 200 characters throughout the park.

In 1981, Six Flags Magic Mountain is the puppet mecca of Southern California. The lavish new "Hooray For Hollywood" marionette revue in one of the world's largest indoor theaters built for puppets, the Magic Moments Theatre, pays a tribute this year to the stars of the old-time movies.

Original figures with the style, look and mannerisms of great screen legends will perform in a thrilling new show-stopper. Cameo appearances by puppet likenesses of W. C. Fields, the Marx Brothers, Mae West, George Burns, Liza Minelli, Burt Reynolds and Raquel Welch spice up the show with one-liners. Other stars such as Charlie Chaplin and Judy Garland will perform handclapping dance numbers with all the glitz only Hollywood inspires.

The stage itself is taking on a new look with a

horseshoe runway and a dazzling electric proscenium.

John Hardman Productions, which stages the puppet shows for the Six Flags park, is an innovator in long and short string, rod and mechanical puppets. Black light extravaganzas with dancing dinosaurs will highlight the La Brea Tar Pit sequence. Noble shirts will duel for the attention of a pretty apron on a laundry line during the snappy choreography in the Chinatown number in 'Hooray.'

"Making inanimate objects come alive is the great single challenge of puppeteering," said John Hardman. "It's a great love of every manipulator, I suppose. The Chinatown number is a good example of using strictly non-lifelike images and making them possess human characteristics."

This year, Captain LaFeet's Flagship Follies, a puppet show aboard a pirate ship, is an all-new jubilee of comedy on the high seas. Some very

famous seagulls will be presented in a Miss Southern California contest. Among the "showgulls" will be Miss Lagoon, star of the film "Where the Bouys Are," and Miss Santa Monica, last featured in "Guys and Gulls." It was rumored she entered the beauty contest through "pier" pressure.

The puppet shows run at posted times every operating day of the year. Admission to all rides, shows and attractions at Six Flags Magic Mountain is included in each admission ticket.

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Jan 11, 2025